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They became known as the Rhodesian Ndebele or Matabele. Posselt, who worked among them, does not record in their history any fight with Zwangendaba, nor do Elmslie, Bryant, Young or Chibambo. Money and Smith say that it is a matter of doubt whether or not Zwangendaba met Mzilikazi. However, Wiese, who states that Zwangendaba broke away from Mzilikazi, says that there was a fight between them. Lancaster writes that there was a fight on the Transvaal border in 1828 before the raid of 1833. Poole makes this fight take place in about 1833 and writes of the Ngoni at that time living in the vicinity of modern Bulawayo and raiding Mzilikazi in the Transvaal. If we are to accept the existence of contact between Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi at all, either of these two versions is preferable to that of Winterbottom, who implies that after taking part in the 1833 raid at Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba moved to the vicinity of Bulawayo where he met Mzilikazi, only to move on to the Zambezi in 1835. Winterbottom crowds into two years more marching and fighting than seems likely to have taken place. There is also conclusive evidence, set out by Posselt, that Mzilikazi did not leave the Transvaal under Boer pressure until about 1838.

If Zwangendaba and Mzilikazi were not living side by side, the suggestion by Lancaster and Winterbottom that they quarrelled about a dog is unlikely to be correct. There may be confusion here with the story, recorded by Field and Rangeley, of a quarrel between Mpezeni and Mwambera over their dogs.[2]

6. *Fission*

Various writers describe three occasions on which, according to their accounts, dissident sections broke off from the main body of Ngoni prior to Zwangendaba's death. Our view is that only one of these secessions actually took place, and that it was relatively unimportant.

The first allegedly dissident group is that sometimes known as the Maseko Ngoni, now dwelling in the region round Mount Domwe, on both sides of the border between southern Nyasaland and Portuguese East Africa. Murray, Young, Hatchell, Poole and Bruwer state that after crossing the River Zambezi together, the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland broke off from Zwangendaba while he was in Nsenga country. Laws, Johnson, Soga, Lancaster and Rangeley state that these Ngoni crossed the Zambezi separately from Zwangendaba. Elmslie says that they were not an offshoot of Zwangendaba's party, while Read, Chibambo and Winterbottom state that they broke away from Mzilikazi, not from Zwangendaba. Fraser mentions a group that remained behind when Zwangendaba crossed the river and says that it went on to the east of Lake Nyasa, but does not say that it later returned to southern Nyasaland. Of all these writers, Read has had most contact with the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, and her account, as amplified by Winter-

[2] Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 5; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', pp. 15*f*; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 78, 85; Young, *History*, pp. 109*f*; Money and Smith, 'Explorations', p. 190; Posselt, *Fact and fiction*, p. 171; Field, *Visitations*, pp. 16*f*; Rangeley, 'Mbeza', p. 63.

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bottom, seems the most acceptable.[33] Two other versions of this alleged dissension can also be rejected. Bryant says that the southern Nyasaland Ngoni remained behind after the main body had crossed the river and that they were led by Gwasa (*sic*), Zwangendaba's principal headman. Stigand's account is similar, except that he says they broke off after crossing the river. This conflicts with the evidence of Young and Chibambo of the subsequent part played by Gwaza, first lieutenant in segment 1, with Zwangendaba's own group. We must also reject the contention of Coxhead and Hodgson that the southern Nyasaland group broke away from the main body of Ngoni after Zwangendaba's death in Tanganyika Territory. The statement made by Stanley and followed by numerous other writers that the Hehe are an Ngoni group is quite without foundation.[34] Some other communities in southern Tanganyika who were merely raided by Ngoni have themselves taken the name Ngoni or some other name used by Ngoni.[35]

Poole speaks in one place of 'the secession of Nquaba' (Nxaba) from Zwangendaba, but this does not tally with his earlier statements that Nxaba's migration was independent of Zwangendaba, and that the first secession from Zwangendaba's host was that of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni. Bryant's account of Nxaba is much fuller than Poole's, and contradicts Poole's suggestion that Nxaba crossed the Zambezi at the Lupata Gorge. According to Bryant, Nxaba's group never formed part of Zwangendaba's following, and Nxaba was eventually killed in Barotseland. Chibambo and Winterbottom support Bryant.[36]

Posselt, who worked among Mzilikazi's people, states that a section of Zwangendaba's group, composed of Swazi, broke off at about the time of the Zambezi crossing and turned back to join Mzilikazi who married the woman who led the dissident section.

[33] The secession of the southern Nyasaland Ngoni from Mzilikazi may explain Wiese's and Decle's assertions that Zwangendaba himself broke away from Mzilikazi. Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 466; Decle, *Savage Africa*, p. 151.

[34] Murray, *Handbook*, p. 30; Young, *History*, p. 111, and letter in *African Studies*, 1950; Hatchell, 'Angoni' (1935), p. 69; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 11; Laws, p. 85, f.n.1, in Lugard, *East African Empire*, i; Johnson, *Nyasa*, p. 102; Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 275; Lancaster, 'Chronology', pp. 78, 85; Elmslie, *Introductory Grammar*, p. x; Read, 'Tradition', p. 464; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 31; Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 16; Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 312*f*; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 463; Stigand, 'Natives', p. 126; Coxhead, *Native tribes*, p. 20; Hodgson, 'Dowa District', p. 128; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, pp. 499, 503; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', pp. 56, 62.

[35] Maples, *Journals*, p. 13; Weule, *Native Life*, p. 339.

[36] Poole, *Native tribes*, pp. 7 and 6; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 277, 279, 434, 460*f*, 471*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 16; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', p. 18.

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This story is followed by Bryant but does not occur in any accounts collected from Ngoni themselves. It seems probable therefore that this seceding section was not numerous or important.[87]

There are no other disruptions mentioned in the literature, and it seems probable therefore that until the death of Zwangendaba, the State remained largely intact. However the process, common in Bantu Africa, by which rival claimants to a throne succeed only in dividing their kingdom, operated with striking effect as soon as the founder of the State was buried. The elimination of segment 18 has sometimes been suggested as the reason why the State broke up, but it is clear from comparative considerations that a State of this kind was likely at any time to break into a number of independent groups, and that this tendency was greatest at the death or senescence of the king.

About 1840 a number of important people, mainly coming from south of the Zambezi, were killed off as a result of an internal struggle for power in which it appears that the recently captured Tumbuka, who were successful witch-finders, were allied with the Swazi and other Ndandwe against the Tsonga from the Delagoa Bay region.[88] Unfortunately there is very little information available on the relationship of this struggle to the rest of the political system. It is, however, clear that the effect of killing off a large number of Ngoni of Tsonga origin was insufficient to prevent the State breaking up a few years later.

When Zwangendaba died, his sons were still young and, for the time being, effective leadership of the State was disputed between men of his own generation whose positions are shown in Diagram 2. His brothers, the lords of segments 5 and 6, were already dead. Fraser describes the dispute as a struggle between Ntabeni's children and Mgayi. Ntabeni was a younger brother of Zwangendaba and the lord of segment 7 while Mgayi was Zwangendaba's father's younger brother's son who, on Chibambo's evidence, represented the interests of the residue of segment 1. Rangeley has a slightly different version and makes Mgayi a supporter of segment 4. Poole, presumably following Fraser, says with some qualification that Ntabeni and Mgayi both claimed the chieftainship. From what we know of the south-eastern Bantu, and from our knowledge of present-day Ngoni, it seems unlikely that a brother would claim to be the legitimate heir in preference to a son, however much he might strive to gain ascendancy over the son. It seems preferable to follow Young and Chibambo in regarding Ntabeni and Mgayi

[87] Powell, *Fact and fiction*, pp. 146-7, 176; Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 464 *f.*
[88] See p. 87.

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to Zwangendaba's father's brother's son Mgayi, of the residue of segment 1.

Elmslie states that Ntabeni's people, i.e. those of segment 7, went northward on the west side of Tanganyika and he is followed in this by Murray, Bryant and Tew. Elmslie bases his statement on Stewart, who heard of them there in 1879. However, Stewart did not visit the west side of Lake Tanganyika himself, and merely gathered his information from people in a Mambwe village on his way to the lake in October 1879. The account of the Ngoni that they gave him was incorrect in a number of particulars, and we have, therefore, to treat with caution their statement about the existence of an Ngoni group west of Lake Tanganyika. Even if part of this segment did settle there, it is certain that the whole of segment 7 did not. Hatchell gives genealogical information for the group of Ngoni at present near Runsewe, Kahama District, Tanganyika Territory, which links them to Ntabeni and segment 7. Stanley describes an Ngoni group which attacked Ujiji and was allied to Mirambo, and in the light of Hatchell's account it is certain that Stanley is here referring to part, if not the whole, of segment 7. This interpretation is made by Fraser, and is in accord with Young and Chibambo. Hence we may conclude that the main body of segment 7 went north on the east side of Lake Tanganyika and eventually settled in Kahama District.

Part of segment 7 may have split off and gone elsewhere, possibly to the west of the lake. Hatchell, in his account of the Kahama group, does not mention Ngodoyi, son of Ntabeni, and it is possible that he may have led a group elsewhere although Rangeley states that it was his following that reached Kahama. Hatchell and Winterbottom write of an abortive expedition by Zwangendaba to the western shores of Lake Tanganyika but make no mention of a group remaining there.

This interpretation conflicts with Elmslie, who says that segment 7 was west of the lake while the group encountered by Stanley were a separate group led by Ntutu. Elmslie does not say who Ntutu was, but it is clear from the context that he does not refer to Ntutu Mpezeni. Hatchell does not mention the name Ntutu in his genealogies. Elmslie may, therefore, have been misled on this point.

The only other writer to mention a group west of the lake is Poole, who says that Ntabeni settled west of the lake in Nyamwezi country, where they were known as Watuta, and, co-operating with the Ruga-Ruga, were encountered by Livingstone and Stanley in 1871. Since in 1871 Livingstone, Stanley, the Ruga-Ruga, and the main body of Nyamwezi were all east of the lake, it appears that Poole intended to write 'east', not 'west'.

Colle refers to contact between the Ngoni and Luba, but the section of Luba with whom the Ngoni fought had crossed from the Congo to the east side of Lake Tanganyika before encountering the Ngoni. The existence of an Ngoni group on the west side of Lake Tanganyika seems therefore to be doubtful.[84]

Fraser says that Mgayi led the main body, including Mpezeni, Mwambera, and Mperembe, as far north as Victoria Nyanza. Finding the country poor, he led them back towards Sukuma country, but died on the way. Fraser is followed by Poole, Soga and Winterbottom. It is perhaps significant that Fraser does not

[84] Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 25-7; Murray, *Handbook*, p. 29; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 468; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 94; Stewart, 'Lake Nyassa', p. 268; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Hatchell, 'Tanganyika territory' (1935), pp. 69*f*; Stanley, *Dark Continent*, i, p. 499; Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Young, *History*, p. 115; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 29; Colle, *Baluba*, p. 65; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 62.

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mention Ntabeni's group as reaching Victoria Nyanza, and it may be that he has merely attributed this exploit to the wrong group. Such an interpretation would be in accord with the accounts of Elmslie, Young, Chibambo and Rangeley, and following them, Bryant and Tew. All these writers imply that the main body of Ngoni did not go farther north than Ufipa. It also provides a more reasonable chronology, for by Fraser's version we have to assume that within only about five years the main body of Ngoni traversed Tanganyika Territory from south to north and then back again. Lancaster is inconclusive on this point.[86]

7. *Mpezeni's kingdom*

Mgayi did not live long as regent and after his death the senior lieutenant of segment 1 made Mpezeni chief. There was a considerable shortage of food at the time and this, combined with dissension in the tribe about the succession, appears to have precipitated a further split. A follower of Zwangendaba called Zulu Gama, whose position in the segmentary organization seems not to have been recorded, led his segment off to the east, where in the vicinity of Songea he met with that group of Maseko Ngoni which we have mentioned earlier, and who probably broke off from the Ndebele some time prior to 1835. For a while the two groups operated as one but soon they split apart. Some people stayed on in Songea District, others went south and eventually rounded the southern end of Lake Nyasa to arrive in the Dedza District of southern Nyasaland, where they remain to-day.

Of those that remained behind under Mpezeni, the principal cleavage was between segments 2, 4, 5 and 6, all led by Mpezeni, on the one side and segment 3 with the headquarters of segment 1 on the other. Led by the senior lieutenant of segment 1, the latter group moved off to the south-east while Mpezeni moved west. While in the country of the Bisa, segment 2 broke off from Mpezeni and after settling for a while in Bemba country as an independent group it eventually went back to join segment 3. Mpezeni, with segments 4, 5 and 6, went south and eventually arrived in Fort Jameson District. His leadership of these segments seems not to have been questioned, but in the other group the senior lieutenant of segment 1 at first supported the headquarters of segment 3 against the claims to the chieftainship made by segment 8. Mtwalo, the son of Zwangendaba who had been put in charge of the headquarters of segment 3, protested, however, that the real head of that segment was Mwambera, head of segment 8, who thus became chief.

[86] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 274; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', p. 18; Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 27; Young, *History*, pp. 115*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 29*ff*; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 467; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 94; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 86; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 63.

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423 society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in 361 any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because [311] the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

557 Power in the State was thus power over people rather than 631 over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but 231 even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather [262] than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine [422] that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village [643] headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not [668] struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers. The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the [727] allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors 727 kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in [643] general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids [721] organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 37.

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successive head of a major segment memorialized in this way, but the major divisions of his polygynous household as well.

6. *Splitting the State*

When splits occurred in the State, the cleavages were along segmentary, and not age-set, lines. The headquarters of the highest segment was differentiated from the major subdivisions within that segment, and the various divergent groups can be identified by the different segments which they represented. Once fission had taken place, a realignment of segments was sometimes necessary. When after the death of Zwangendaba his great wife's segment was split, in each divergent group the man who was nearest in the line of succession to head of her segment claimed to be the rightful heir, and on the strength of that claim assumed leadership of the group.

Fission in the State was the end result of segmentation within it. Here we are using these two terms for two different processes. By segmentation we mean the process by which any social group becomes subdivided internally while retaining its own unity and cohesion. By fission we mean the process by which a social group divides into two or more distinct groups, so that the original group disappears as a social entity.[43] Fission in the Ngoni State occurred without affecting the arrangement of segments within each group, but did disrupt the highest segment of all, within which the divergent groups had hitherto been contained. Segmentation was a process of growth taking place at all levels but particularly at the bottom of the hierarchy of political groups, while fission was a process occurring only at the highest level. The process of segmentation in one generation could not alter the formal arrangement of higher segments determined in the previous generation, even though with each generation there was in fact an effective shift in the distribution of political power accompanied by spatial differentiation. The process of fission did not bring into being *any new segments, but merely* dissolved the highest segment of all as a cohering political unit. The two processes were thus formally and in reality quite distinct, even though it is clear that they were not independent of one another. Increasing divergence of interest found expression at first in the creation of separate segments and ultimately in the formation of separate states.

The processes of segmentation and of spatial differentiation within the State were in general peaceful. Fission was a hazardous

[43] This use of terms differs from that of Fortes. He uses 'segmentation' to refer to a *state* of internal subdivision within a group, and 'fission' to refer to the *process* of internal subdivision. cf. Fortes, *Web of kinship, passim.* I am indebted to Mrs. U. P. Mayer for this observation.

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procedure. Segment 2 broke away from segment 3 and later rejoined it peaceably, but other instances of fission were accompanied by fighting. The leader of each divergent group rallied his warriors, the one to protect his flight, the other to pursue and annihilate the departing traitors. If the flight was successful, the leader of the new State assumed the salutations and marks of rank of a Paramount Chief and held his own first fruits ceremony. The internal organization of his State and of the one he had left continued on the same lines as before. This seems to have been the sequence of events when Zulu Gama, Ciwele Ndhlovu, and segment 7 each broke away from the main body. When the residue of segment 1 broke away from segment 4, the dissident group destroyed the crops of those who remained, but Chibambo does not mention fighting on that occasion.[43] There are two possible instances of a divergent group going away to join some other state. Segment 7 was associated for a while with Mirambo and his Rugaruga, and Zulu Gama joined forces in Tanganyika with the Maseko Ngoni, now in southern Nyasaland.[44] But neither of these alliances lasted long. As we would expect there is less evidence for the unsuccessful attempts at fission which it seems reasonable to assume must have taken place. I did, however, collect one clear account of a regional governor who was thought by Zwangendaba to be lagging behind on the migration with the intention of deserting with his segment. Zwangendaba sent an army against the regional governor, who was killed. His segment, under the charge of his son, was forced to live in the village of a lieutenant of Zwangendaba's father. It is said that Zwangendaba continued to punish the would-be rebels by drafting members of the segment to other parts of the residential system from time to time.

Thus in one sense the State was held together by armed force. Certainly there were mystical values associated with the chieftainship. It is now difficult to gain much precise information on this topic but it is apparent from present-day practice and from comparative evidence that the chiefly office was hedged about with mystical sanctions and that the chief was no mere secular ruler. Yet it is also clear that these values were associated with the office of chieftainship rather than with the particular occupant of the office, and that they were linked to successful military achievement. We might also suggest that because so many men became Ngoni only after they had grown up in quite different cultures, mystical

[43] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 34.
[44] Stanley, *Livingstone*, p. 289, and *Dark Continent*, I, p. 495; Hatchell, 'Angoni', *passim*.

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the latter. This alignment established, it was natural that Warton, though not himself a party to the Imperial struggle, should utilize it by arriving in the country from Tete, in Portuguese territory, rather than from Nyasaland, that he should pose as Wiese's brother, and, assuming that the Foreign Office was correctly informed, that he should fly a Portuguese flag. Genthe played a similar game with his Union Jack, but in a different area among the raided tribes. Even among the British, Mpezeni had three groups to deal with, North Charterland, B.S.A. Company, and the Nyasaland Administration. He was initially friendly and later hostile towards the first, unyielding to the second, and appealed for help to the third, although, or perhaps because, it was farthest away.

The effective cleavage within the Ngoni chiefdom was between the chief and his eldest son. We might have expected the major cleavage to have been between one son and another, particularly in view of North Charterland support for one son rather than another. We have some information concerning who Wiese and Deare thought were their friends, but some of these people appear to have taken a prominent part in the fighting. Mpezeni was certainly not entirely deserted by his own people, for he was able to send emissaries to Kotakota and to warn Wiese and Deare of plots against their lives.[121] The situation in which one section of the population supported the chief and the remainder supported his son may have been facilitated by the existence of what we have called rump segments in the residential system. For in this system the dependants of a segment head were not completely divided up among his heirs; there was a remainder who even after the death of the head constituted a rump segment and represented his interests as against those of his sons. Thus it may be that Mpezeni was supported by those who remained in his great wife's village, or perhaps in his father's great wife's village, as against those who had broken out from it. In the absence of satisfactory evidence, our hypothesis remains unverified. Such evidence as there is, is contradictory. Deare made friends, eventually, with the two senior lieutenants of segment 10, the segment of Mpezeni's great wife; this would support our thesis, as does Wiese's mention of the senior of these as one of his friends. Yet both of them, according to my informants, descendants of these men, were shot in the course of the campaign; this points against our thesis. In the list of friends and enemies which Wiese and his companions gave Brake, segments 4 and 10 each have members in both lists. Among those listed as friends are Ciboma msitini, regional governor in segment 4 and

[121] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186; 187, fo. 137; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May.

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Mcekwani mpanza (Chequani), a lieutenant of segment 10. Among the enemies are Ngoka Lukhezo zulu (Goka), a lieutenant of segment 4, and Kamzembe maiemesa (Camsembe), regional governor in segment 10.[122] The elucidation of this cleavage is further complicated by the fact that from 1889 until 1898 Mpezeni lived at least most of the time not with his great wife but with his favourite, the leader of the subsidiary bevy in segment 15.[123] He may have done this to place himself at a distance from Wiese, who had a store at the headquarters of segment 4, Mpezeni's father's great wife's village, and from the North Charterland, whose Fort Young was just outside the headquarters of segment 10, his own great wife's village. There is, however, no definite evidence for this.

Regarding the Europeans for the moment as external agents, we can see how inter-African relations were affected by them. Within the chiefdom the most striking phenomenon was the prohibition on raiding imposed by the Whites. It was this which appears to have accentuated the cleavage between Mpezeni and his sons and which may have given Nsingu an external object of attack formidable enough to unite him with his brothers. The Ngoni State was essentially a military one and each successive generation of leaders needed to glorify themselves in battle. Mpezeni at the end of his life, his battles over, could well favour peace but his sons had still to demonstrate their valour and swell their segments with captives. The prohibition on raiding struck at at the root of the State, socially as well as economically. External relations changed their content, and neighbouring chiefs were able to visit Ngoniland unmolested. A more significant change of relation was attempted when Chabisa tried to unite the Fort Jameson and northern Nyasaland groups of Ngoni against the Europeans. Chabisa failed, but even so Ngoni re-established contact with the Ndebele after a lapse of some sixty-five years as the direct result of European action.

In all this the Arabs played only a minor part. Some Arabs traded with Mpezeni for slaves, and Ngoni used sometimes to raid Arab caravans. This we know from Deare, who saw an Arab with Mpezeni and to whom Nsingu related the story of a successful attack on a caravan. Deare mentions that this Arab tried to influence Mpezeni against him.[124] Apart from this, there is little information on their dealings with this group of Ngoni. The main struggle between Administration and Arabs was fought out at

[122] 187, fo. 137. cf. Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 20.
[123] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 79.
[124] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 4 May.

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the post of deputy is still of significance,[7] but in the life of the county the chief's deputy does not play a great part. One man appointed as chief's deputy went to Southern Rhodesia but no one has been appointed in his place and the chief manages without a deputy.

Another traditional post which still functions is that of chief's messenger.[8] This post is quite distinct from that of district messenger who is an employee of the Administration, and of Native Authority messenger. The district messengers and Native Authority messengers are full-time civil servants, while the chief's messengers are only called upon from time to time and are not paid. The county chief nominates one man for each cluster of half a dozen villages or so in his county to be responsible for informing the village headmen in his cluster of forthcoming county meetings and royal hunts. Sometimes a man who has been nominated accepts his post reluctantly, but it is difficult for him to refuse, and an ambitious man may welcome the appointment for the contact it gives him with his chief.

The royal descent-name *jere* is held by all patrilineal descendants of Zwangendaba's father and by the patrilineal descendants of various other people who were given the name by Zwangendaba or Mpezeni I.[9] Only two county chiefs do not bear this name. People who do not hold it regard all those who do as kinsfolk of the Paramount Chief, and from time to time in the appointment of men to office, the common people have insisted that not all the posts should go to men bearing this name. The Administration has regarded all men named *jere* in the same way, and in its efforts to counter nepotism has made similar stipulations. A simple dichotomy of this kind overlooks the divisions within the royal house and between the agnatic kinsmen of the Paramount Chief and those who have acquired the name by other means. Distant agnatic relationship may imply less identity of interest than close non-agnatic ties. Nevertheless the appointment of councillors and others with non-royal descent names does assist the notion that the people as well as the chief have interests in the common good and share the responsibility of pursuing it.

From time to time efforts are made to create new chieftainships. We have already mentioned one attempt.[10] The initiative comes usually from the junior kinsman of a chief to whom he has

[7] See my 'Village headman', pp. 100-6.

[8] *Lingusa*. cf. Zulu *i(li)*ngusa, messenger sent by a king or chief.

[9] See Brower, *Mbiri*, p. 23, for the categories of persons bearing the royal descent name.

[10] See p. 140*f*.

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delegated a certain amount of responsibility, such as the collection of licence fees or the holding of a court not recognized by the Administration but supplied by the county clerk with the apparatus of official forms. The would-be chief then argues that the rural district in which he lives has always been distinct from the rest of the county and that it is too far for the people in it to attend at the county court. No attempt of this kind since 1920 has been successful, although the recent dispersal of villages into reopened land outside the reserves has increased the distances some litigants have to travel to the county court, and hence the number of disputes referred to these unrecognized local leaders has increased.

4. *The chief and his people*

The chief interacts with his people in a variety of situations. He receives their presents of beer and other valuables, he presides at county meetings, and organizes the royal hunts. He visits them in their villages when there are important celebrations and festivities and they go to him with their requests and complaints.

Ngoni offer beer as one of their principal expressions of hospitality, and in a formal beer party the ordered pattern of the social structure is acted out in the distribution and dispensation of the various jars and bowls of beer.[11] One traditional obligation is to provide a jar of beer for the head of the segment. Everyone belongs, or belonged, to a hierarchy of segments so that there were many people who ought to be honoured in this way at every party. In practice, since beer is heavy to carry, few jars move outside the village in which they are brewed, but a distant political superior is sometimes called in to a village to attend a beer party at which he will be honoured in this way. In the chief's own village the chief lives close at hand and beer is provided in much the same way as for the headman in an ordinary village. When beer is brewed by important people in the capital and regal villages they often call the chief to come and visit them and enjoy their hospitality. The chief is not so frequently called to beer in commoner villages, but on an important occasion such as the formal installation of a village official, or the formal announcement that a village has moved to a new site, it is appropriate to invite the chief to attend. A chief may also be honoured by his affines with beer brewed for him in the same way as any other man, but there is some disagreement about the appropriateness of this, for the chief 'has exceeded all others'

[11] See Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 217-19, for the rules of and attitudes towards beer drinking.